

# THE TRANSPORTATION LINK



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Disadvantaged  
Business Utilization

This issue of *The Transportation Link* offers businesses the opportunity to learn about Department of Transportation (DOT) procurements ~ without ever leaving the office. The use of the Internet to provide contracting information to interested businesses once was considered the future. It's here now, at your keyboard. For businesses to compete in today's market, access to the Internet is essential.

In opening the doors of opportunity for small, disadvantaged and women-owned businesses, many of the DOT Operating Administrations have provided procurement information on their web-sites. Individual web sites make it easier for businesses to identify and select the best prospects for competition. Likewise, many state DOTs have also established similar websites.

We have taken the time to search the Internet for DOT procurement opportunities. All of the sites can be linked to from [osdbuweb.dot.gov/consolic.htm](http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/consolic.htm). Bookmark this site! As these sites are dynamic, businesses must visit them regularly. The DOT Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)'s website will serve as the "one-stop shopping site" for all DOT business opportunities.

## The Web Connects Businesses to DOT Dollars \$\$\$

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), with its 11 Operating Administrations (OAs), and the 50 state DOTs, amass thousands of contracting opportunities for businesses in the United States each year. Identifying these DOT contract opportunities may represent a challenge for small, disadvantaged and women-owned businesses. For these small companies with limited resources, marketing DOT may be very challenging and even more costly in proportion to the expenses incurred by larger companies who can absorb overhead costs more easily. That makes finding the right DOT contracting opportunities ~ the ones that represent the best prospects for winning a contract ~ paramount for a small business.

The goal of the DOT Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) is to assist small, disadvantaged and women-owned businesses identify these opportunities. Much like the jigsaw puzzle, OSDBU can help identify the puzzle pieces (contract opportunities), but it is the responsibility of the business owner to determine how the pieces fit together by deciding which contract opportunities to pursue.



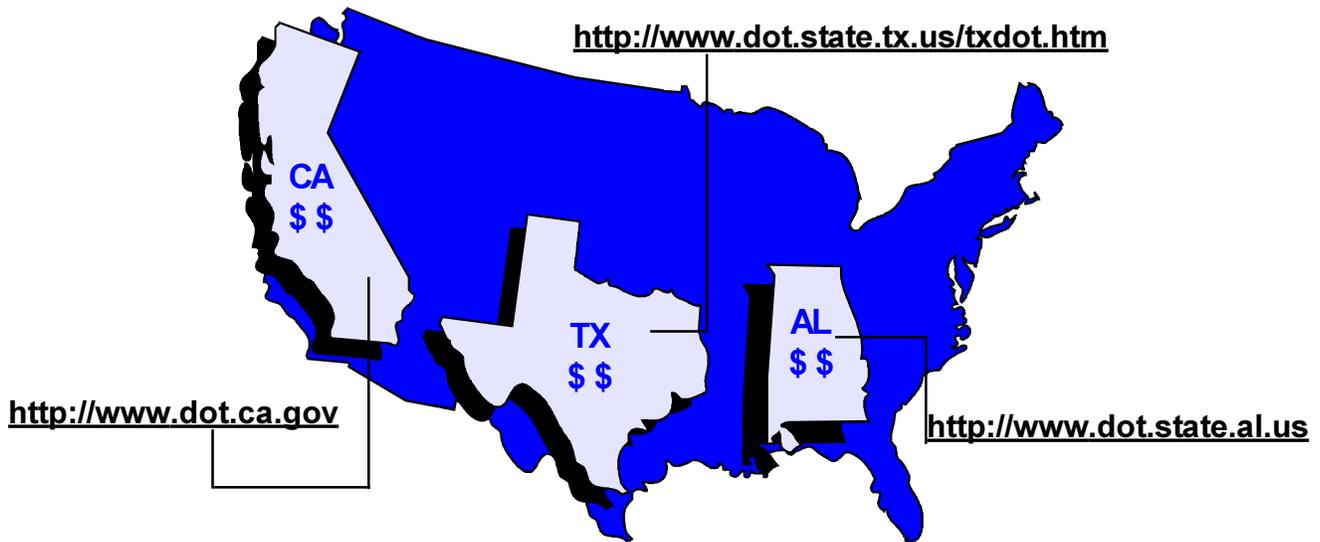
### *U.S. DOT - Operating Administrations*

OSDBU publishes the annual DOT direct procurement forecast, a collection of potential contract opportunities that each OA identifies as part of their advanced acquisition planning process. The procurement forecast usually reflects contract opportunities estimated to exceed \$100,000. Therefore, many smaller potential opportunities exist beyond those listed in the procurement forecast. In fact, during FY 1997, more than 80% of contracts awarded to small businesses comprised values of less than \$100,000.

How does a small business uncover these opportunities? The most cost effective and complete source of OA contract opportunities is found via the Internet. DOT posts the OAs annual procurement forecast data on the OSDBU website. The OAs are able to continually update their data, making the procurement information dynamic. Many of the OAs have regional offices which also maintain websites where contract opportunities are frequently posted, including those

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## Surf Coast-to-Coast for Procurement Opportunities



*Web, continued from page 1*  
valued at \$100,000 or less.

### *State DOTs*

While the direct procurement information offered by the DOT through the various OAs provides a tremendous potential for contracting opportunities, substantially more funds are distributed each year to the state, regional and local DOTs. This US DOT assisted funding puts the necessary capital under local control for specific transportation development or improvement projects.

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) reauthorization legislation will allocate approximately \$200 billion over the next six years for highways, transit, safety, research and railroads. This authorization represents a significant portion of capital available to businesses seeking contracting opportunities with federal and state DOT offices. Much of this authorization is delegated to state and local governments. As such, state DOT offices provide excellent prospects for businesses due to proximity of the work to the business.

Small, disadvantaged and women-owned businesses usually concentrate on contract opportunities within a specific region or locale to reduce overhead costs as associated with marketing such as travel, lodging, etc. Much like the federal

side of DOT, nearly all state DOTs have posted many of their contract opportunities on the Internet to provide quicker turnaround of contract awards and offer a wider audience from which to solicit proposals. Once a local business establishes a good reputation with state and local DOT offices, many companies continue to grow their businesses from these very same agencies.

Nearly all state DOTs have contracting material available via the Internet from their individual state home pages. Contracting materials range in scope from general contracting information to very specific details on contracting opportunities. Depending on the state DOT web site, the information available can represent a fortune of opportunities.

Web sites are often very dynamic, so check back often, even daily for the latest information. If your state or regional DOT web site does not list individual opportunities, or the specific contracting information you need, be proactive and email or contact the web master of the site. You may be surprised how responsive state DOTs may be to a request from a business for that additional information.

### *The Internet as a Tool*

To more easily find this information

and to increase your potential for success, businesses need to obtain access to the Internet soon. While some individuals may be hesitant to get into the Internet, or on a computer for that matter, the technology is no longer the future ~ it's here now! To continue to successfully do business with the government, on the federal, state or local level, a business will need to use a computer and to access the Internet.

How and where would a business start to access the procurement information available on the web? To save time, the OSDBU has completed the "footwork" and compiled a list of OA and state Internet locations that contain procurement information. The OSDBU has posted this information on the OSDBU web site at [osdbuweb.dot.gov/consolic.htm](http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/consolic.htm), making this your gateway to successful contracting with the DOT.

*For further information related to contracting opportunities, please refer to the OSDBU's web site at <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov> or questions may be addressed to the OSDBU National Information Clearinghouse, (800) 532-1169.*

## ISTEA Surface Transportation Bill Passes Congress

On Friday, May 22, 1998, Congress passed TEA-21, the bill to reauthorize the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) programs. The Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater recommended that President Clinton sign this historic legislation that, "...invests in highways, transit, and new transportation technologies, demonstrates a strong commitment to programs that improve safety and protect the environment, and includes initiatives to expand opportunity, such as a continued disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) program."

The following are excerpts from Secretary Slater's statement issued regarding the passing of the ISTEA legislation by Congress.

"Today, Congress passed TEA-21 to reauthorize ISTEA's transportation programs. This historic legislation reflects President Clinton's priorities of providing fiscally-responsible, balanced investment in our transportation system while continuing to invest in our people. It affirms the President's priorities; in fact, there has never been a transportation bill that has gone as far in meeting Presidential priorities. I will recommend that President Clinton sign this bill.

For the past five years, continuing to rebuild America has been among President Clinton's highest priorities, and this legislation furthers that legacy. This bill does so while protecting our commitments to a balanced budget and

to the President's priorities, such as education, child care, and, most importantly, Social Security."

"Finally, this bill expands opportunity for all Americans through a new Access to Jobs program to help those making the transition from welfare rolls to payrolls, a continued, effective Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program, and continued strong labor protections for workers.

I commend the Congressional leadership for their work in passing this bipartisan legislation."

*For more information on ISTEA/TEA-21, visit the OSDBU web site at: <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov> or the DOT Public Affairs page at: <http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm>.*

## CSI's Tom Godwin Points to the Web for Continued Success

Complexity Simplified, Inc. (CSI) is a company that lives up to its name. Thomas A. Godwin, the owner of Denver-based CSI, is a man with 40 years of experience solving complex engineering, management and organizational problems. CSI is 8(a) certified American Indian owned business, providing management consulting services to the government, major corporations, as well as providing assistance to small disadvantaged, minority and women owned-businesses.

What does CSI recommend for today's entrepreneur bent on growing their business and wanting to get a leg up on the competition? Business should start to focus on selling their goods and services via the Internet through Electronic Commerce/Electronic Data Interchange (EC/EDI). To this purpose, CSI created a telecommunications network and computer system available at the web location [www.BASvan.com](http://www.BASvan.com).

The system, BASvan, connects to FACNET (Federal Acquisition Computer Network), the government's electronic commerce system. This electronic system contains information on contracting opportunities, accepts the submission

of bids, and allows direct communication from prospective bidders in response to solicitation questions. Electronic Commerce, as employed at BASvan, allows both

procurement needs.

Additionally, the site provides a unique interactive-computer based training center. Billed as a Virtual University, BASvan helps businesses through training in such areas as EDI/FACNET Training, Smarter Business Planning, The Basics of Exporting, Working Smarter with TQM, Smarter Joint Ventures, Smarter Proposals and a host of ISO Training classes.

*There are many firms which offer services similar to CSI. If you wish additional information on CSI, visit the BASvan site at [www.BASvan.com](http://www.BASvan.com) or email Complexity Simplified, Inc. at [csi@basvan.com](mailto:csi@basvan.com). Mail may be sent to CSI, P.O. Box 100280, Denver, CO 80250. Phone (303) 777-1121 and Fax at (303) 777-5214.*

Tom Godwin suggests that Small Business Owners ask themselves:

*"How many contracts did I get from the World Wide Web, or better yet, do I have daily access to the Web?"*

parties to communicate and complete transactions through email. At this location, both the government and private sector can locate suppliers to fill their



## Get on the Internet!

For computer owners, getting on the Internet is as easy as A-B-C. Simply remember these steps to getting on-line:

**A**cquire the necessary hardware. A quality modem, whether internal or external, is required to gain Internet access. A modem connects a computer to the telephone network. The standard connection speeds vary from 14.4K to 56.5K;

**B**uy services from an Internet Service Provider (ISP) or on-line service. The major national or regional ISPs and on-line services have very similar pricing, so it's important to pay attention to the details of their plans. Check out the latest monthly plans and trial offers, and compare the services based on monthly usage. Visit <http://www.barkers.org/online> for more information on selecting an ISP or on-line services and finally;

**C**onnect to the Internet and open up your contracting opportunities within DOT. Website addresses are contained on the OSDBU website at <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/consolic.htm>.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST TO M/WBES JUNE/JULY 1998

Date	Event	Location	Contact
June 14-17	<b>14th Annual Airport Business Diversity Conference</b> , Sponsored by the Airport Minority Advisory Council and Metro Washington Airports Authority	Washington, DC	Jerry Sharp or Sonya Shackelford (703) 548-0874
June 15-16	<b>Access '98</b> , Sponsored by Dallas/Ft. Worth Minority Business Development Council	Houston, TX	Margo Posey (214) 630-0747
June 15-17	<b>Business Connection '98</b> , Sponsored by Greater Dayton Minority Purchasing Council	Dayton, OH	Bob Lowe (937) 226-8265
June 16-18	<b>Alabama Business Connection '98</b> , Sponsored by the Alabama Minority Supplier Development Council	Huntsville, AL	Estella Raymond (334) 471-6380
June 17	<b>Procurement Fair Industry Council for Small Business Development</b>	Santa Clara, CA	Fran Scalzo (408) 924-5429
June 18-19	<b>1998 Opportunity Fair &amp; Conference</b> , Sponsored by Maryland/DC Minority Supplier Development Council	Washington, DC	Office Personnel (410) 997-7599
June 22-23	<b>Kentuckiana Minority Business Trade Show &amp; Conference</b> , Sponsored by Kentuckiana Minority Supplier Development Council	Louisville, KY	Yolanda Gardner (502) 625-0135 <a href="http://www.kmsdc.org">www.kmsdc.org</a>
June 23-24	<b>Business Opportunity Fair</b> , Sponsored by Upstate New York Regional Minority Purchasing Council	Buffalo, NY	Toi Pickens (716) 871-4120
June 24-28	<b>29th Annual NAMC Conference</b> , Sponsored by National Associates of Minority Contractors	Anaheim, CA	Gail Harris (213) 296-3681
June 25-26	<b>Camaters-7 Methodology</b> , Sponsored by BJ Concepts	Ipswich, MA	Earl Holland (703) 425-3309
July 8-12	<b>National Meeting &amp; Training Conference</b> , Sponsored by Conference of Minority Transportation Officials	Baltimore, MD	Monica Simon (202) 289-0567
July 12-17	<b>1998 Advanced Minority Business Executive Program</b> , Sponsored by the Amos Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth College	Hanover, NH	Paula Graves (603) 646-3740

<http://osdbuweb.dot.gov>

*Address Correction Requested*

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